

Earthquake in Pakistan

More than 50,000 people died when a massive earthquake struck the mountainous Kashmir region of northern Pakistan and India on October 8. The 7.6 magnitude quake destroyed 80 percent of buildings in parts of northern Pakistan, wiped out entire villages, injured tens of thousands, and left two million people homeless. Thousands of children died when schools collapsed from the massive quake. The World Health Organization says this calamity is bigger in scale than the tsunami that struck eastern Asia last December.

The earthquake destroyed about 1,000 hospitals, causing major problems in providing urgent medical care for injured survivors. With winter fast approaching, officials fear that many more will perish from disease and exposure to the elements. Relief agencies are in a desperate battle to provide food and shelter to several million people. Thousands huddle in tents, burning wood from collapsed homes to keep warm.

Four days after the quake, Raheema Bibi, 25, sat on a pile of rubble in the wrecked town of Battagram—200 kilometers north of Islamabad, Pakistan's capital. She held her infant daughter, Maryam, and two-year-old son, Abdullah. Another son, Wali, 5, lies somewhere under the endless pile of rubble seen for miles around. But Raheema had no time to mourn her first-born. Her biggest concern was to keep her surviving children alive. Both were uninjured in the quake, but with no food, no water, no medicines, and no shelter from the bitter cold winds, it is a battle to survive. Her husband, Alim Khan, has been trying to get to areas south of them where relief supplies are reportedly arriving.

Through reliable Christian contacts in the region, CAM is providing emergency funds for food, water, blankets, and tents in both Pakistan and India. After an investigative trip by CAM personnel, decisions will be finalized on our response to the massive rebuilding needs. As always in tragedies like these, we are also looking at opportunities to provide God's Word to this Muslim area.

You have received a number of emergency mailings from us recently, and we do not want you to feel pressured to help. Respond only as you feel led and are able. Your prayers for the earthquake survivors, victims of the volcano and flooding, and the efforts to assist them are much appreciated. God bless you!

*And they shall go into the holes of the rocks . . . for fear of the Lord . . .
when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.* Isaiah 2:19

Christian Aid Ministries
October 27, 2005

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Volcano and Flooding in Central America

October also brought double disasters to Central America. The long-dormant Santa Ana volcano erupted in El Salvador, and heavy rains caused massive flooding and landslides in both El Salvador and Guatemala. Several villages were buried and turned into mass graves. In addition to a death toll of well over 1,000, thousands more were left homeless or evacuated.

CAM is working with conservative Mennonite churches in Central America to assist victims with emergency relief supplies, building materials, and Bible-story books.

If more funds are received than can be wisely used for these projects, the balance will go to other International-Crisis projects.